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P O E M S .

(PUBLISHED 1830.)



## POEMS.

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### CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

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WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall :  
But the solemn oak tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone :

At noon the wild bee hummeth  
    About the moss'd headstone :  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
    And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
    The fledgling throstle lispeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
    The babbling runnel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

## LILIAN.



AIRY, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can ;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

When my passion seeks  
Pleasance in love-sighs,  
She, looking thro' and thro' me  
Thoroughly to undo me,  
Smiling, never speaks :

So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,  
From beneath her gather'd wimple  
    Glancing with black-beaded eyes,  
Till the lightning laughters dimple  
    The baby-roses in her cheeks ;  
    Then away she flies.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !  
    Gaiety without eclipse  
Wearieth me, May Lilian :  
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth  
    When from crimson-threaded lips  
Silver-treble laughter trilleth :  
    Prythee weep, May Lilian.

Praying all I can,  
If prayers will not hush thee,  
    Airy Lilian,  
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,  
    Fairy Lilian.



## ISABEL.



EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright, but fed  
With the clear-pointed flame of chastity,  
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by  
Pure vestal thoughts in the translucent fane  
Of her still spirit ; locks not wide disspread,  
Madonna-wise on either side her head ;  
Sweet lips whereon perpetually did reign  
The summer calm of golden charity,  
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,  
Revered Isabel, the crown and head,  
The stately flower of female fortitude,  
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowlihead.

The intuitive decision of a bright  
And thorough-edged intellect to part  
Error from crime ; a prudence to withhold ;  
The laws of marriage character'd in gold  
Upon the blanch'd tablets of her heart ;  
A love still burning upward giving light  
To read those laws ; an accent very low  
In blandishment, but a most silver flow  
Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,  
Right to the heart and brain, though undescried,  
Winning its way with extreme gentleness  
Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride ;  
A courage to endure and to obey ;  
A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,  
Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life  
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;  
A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,  
Till in its onward current it absorbs  
With swifter movement and in purer light  
The vexed eddies of its wayward brother ;

A leaning and upbearing parasite,  
Clothing the stem, which else had fallen quite,  
With cluster'd flower-bells and ambrosial orbs  
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each other—  
Shadow forth thee : the world hath not another  
(Though all her fairest forms are types of thee,  
And thou of God in thy great charity)  
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

## MARIANA.

“Mariana in the moated grange.”—*Measure for Measure*.



I.

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots  
Were thickly crusted, one and all :  
The rusted nails fell from the knots  
That held the peach to the garden-wall.  
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :  
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;  
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
Upon the lonely moated grange.  
She only said “ My life is dreary,  
He cometh not,” she said ;  
She said “ I am aweary, aweary ;  
I would that I were dead !”

## II.

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;

Her tears fell ere the dews were dried  
She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
Either at morn or eventide.

After the flitting of the bats,

When thickest dark did trance the sky,  
She drew her casement-curtain by,  
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.

She only said " The night is dreary,

He cometh not," she said :

She said " I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !"

## III.

Upon the middle of the night,

Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :  
The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
From the dark fen the oxen's low  
Came to her : without hope of change,  
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,

Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn  
About the lonely moated grange.

She only said, "The day is dreary,

He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !"

## IV.

About a stone-cast from the wall

A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
And o'er it many, round and small,

The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,

All silver-green with gnarled bark :

For leagues no other tree did dark

The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, "My life is dreary,

He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !"

## v.

And ever when the moon was low,  
And the shrill winds were up and away,  
In the white curtain, to and fro,  
She saw the gusty shadow sway.  
But when the moon was very low,  
And wild winds bound within their cell,  
The shadow of the poplar fell  
Upon her bed, across her brow.  
She only said, "The night is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

## vi.

All day within the dreamy house,  
The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;  
The blue fly sung i' the pane ; the mouse  
Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd,  
Or from the crevice peer'd about.  
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,

Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
Old voices call'd her from without.

She only said, " My life is dreary,

He cometh not," she said ;

She said, " I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !"

## VII.

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,

The slow clock ticking, and the sound  
Which to the wooing wind aloof

The poplar made, did all confound  
Her sense ; but most she loath'd the hour  
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
Athwart the chambers, and the day  
Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then said she, " I am very dreary,

He will not come," she said ;

She wept, " I am aweary, aweary,

Oh God, that I were dead !"



TO ———.



CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful scorn,  
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain  
The knots that tangle human creeds,  
The wounding cords that bind and strain  
The heart until it bleeds,  
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn  
Roof not a glance so keen as thine :  
If aught of prophecy be mine,  
Thou wilt not live in vain.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;  
Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow :  
Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now  
With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.

Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords  
Can do away that ancient lie ;  
A gentler death shall Falsehood die,  
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,  
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,  
Thy kingly intellect shall feed,  
Until she be an athlete bold,  
And weary with a finger's touch  
Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;  
Like that strange angel which of old,  
Until the breaking of the light,  
Wrestled with wandering Israel,  
Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,  
And heaven's mazed signs stood still  
In the dim tract of Penue!

MADLINE.



THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,  
No tranced summer calm is thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.  
Thro' light and shadow thou dost range.  
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
Delicious spites, and darling angers,  
And airy forms of flitting change.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore,  
Revealings deep and clear are thine  
Of wealthy smiles: but who may know  
Whether smile or frown be fleeter?  
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,  
Who may know?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
Light-glooming over eyes divine  
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine.

Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof

From one another,

Each to each is dearest brother ;

Hues of the silken sheeny woof

Momently shot into each other.

All the mystery is thine ;

Smiling frowning evermore,

Thou art perfect in love-lore,

Ever varying Madeline.

A subtle, sudden flame,

By veering passion fann'd,

About thee breaks and dances ;

When I would kiss thy hand,

The flush of anger'd shame

O'erflows thy calmer glances,

And o'er black brows drops down

A sudden-curved frown :

But when I turn away,  
Thou, willing me to stay,  
    Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest :  
    But, looking fixedly the while,  
All my bounding heart entanglest  
    In a golden-netted smile :  
Then in madness and in bliss,  
If my lips should dare to kiss  
Thy taper fingers amorously,  
Again thou blushest angerly ;  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown.

SONG.—THE OWL.

—♦—

WHEN cats run home and light is come,  
And dew is cold upon the ground,  
And the far-off stream is dumb,  
And the whirring sail goes round,  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,  
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,  
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch  
Twice or thrice his roundelay,  
Twice or thrice his roundelay :  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.



THY tuwhits are lull'd I wot,  
    Thy tuwhoos of yesternight.  
Which upon the dark afloat,  
    So took echo with delight,  
    So took echo with delight,  
        That her voice untuneful grown.  
        Wears all day a fainter tone.

I would mock thy chaunt anew ;  
    But I cannot mimick it ;  
Not a whit of thy tuwhoo.  
    Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
    Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
        With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
        Tuwhoo. tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.



I.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free  
In the silken sail of infancy,  
The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
    The forward-flowing tide of time ;  
And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
A down the Tigris I was borne,  
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old ;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
    For it was in the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.



## II.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'  
The low and bloomed foliage, drove  
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove  
The citron-shadows in the blue :  
By garden porches on the brim,  
The costly doors flung open wide,  
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,  
And broider'd sofas on each side :  
    In sooth it was a goodly time,  
    For it was in the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## III.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard  
The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay

Of braided blooms unmown, which crept  
 Adown to where the waters slept.

A goodly place, a goodly time.  
 For it was in the golden prime  
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## IV.

A motion from the river won  
 Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
 My shallop through the star-strown calm.  
 Until another night in night  
 I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
 Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm.  
 Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb  
 Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
 For it was in the golden prime  
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## V.

Still onward ; and the clear canal  
 Is rounded to as clear a lake.

From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rillets musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake  
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.

A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## vi.

Above thro' many a bowery turn  
A walk with vary-colour'd shells  
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side  
All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase, and brazen urn  
In order, eastern flowers large,  
Some dropping low their crimson bells  
Half-closed, and others studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fed the time  
With odour in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid

## VII.

Far off, and where the lemon-grove  
In closest coverture upsprung,  
The living airs of middle night  
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;  
Not he : but something which possess'd  
The darkness of the world, delight,  
Life, anguish, death, immortal love.  
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,  
    Apart from place, withholding time.  
    But flattering the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## VIII.

Black the garden-bowers and grots  
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged  
Above, unwood'd of summer wind :  
A sudden splendour from behind  
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,  
And, flowing rapidly between

Their interspaces, counterchanged  
The level lake with diamond-plots  
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## ix.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,  
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,  
Grew darker from that under-flame :  
So, leaping lightly from the boat,  
With silver anchor left afloat,  
In marvel whence that glory came  
Upon me, as in sleep I sank  
In cool soft turf upon the bank,  
Entranced with that place and time,  
So worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## x.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—  
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
Full of the city's stilly sound,

And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round  
The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
    Graven with emblems of the time,  
    In honour of the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## xi.

With dazed vision unawares  
From the long alley's latticed shade  
Emerged, I came upon the great  
Pavilion of the Caliphat.  
Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
Flung inward over spangled floors,  
Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
Ran up with golden balustrade,  
    After the fashion of the time.  
    And humour of the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## XII.

The fourscore windows all alight  
As with the quintessence of flame,  
A million tapers flaring bright  
From twisted silvers look'd to shame  
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd  
Upon the mooned domes aloof  
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd  
Hundreds of crescents on the roof  
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time,  
To celebrate the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## XIII.

Then stole I up, and trancedly  
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,  
Serene with argent-lidded eyes  
Amorous, and lashes like to rays  
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl  
Tressed with redolent ebony.

In many a dark delicious curl,  
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;  
 The sweetest lady of the time,  
 Well worthy of the golden prime  
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## XIV.

Six columns, three on either side.  
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
 Throne of the massive ore, from which  
 Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,  
 Engarlanded and diaper'd  
 With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.  
 Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd  
 With merriment of kingly pride,  
 Sole star of all that place and time,  
 I saw him—in his golden prime,  
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID !



## ODE TO MEMORY.



I.

THOU who stealest fire,  
From the fountains of the past.  
To glorify the present ; oh, haste,  
Visit my low desire !  
Strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,  
Flinging the gloom of yesternight  
On the white day ; but robed in soften'd light  
Of orient state.

Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,  
Even as a maid, whose stately brow  
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have kiss'd,  
When she, as thou,  
Stays on her floating locks the lovely freight  
Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots  
Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,  
Which in wintertide shall star  
The black earth with brilliance rare.

## III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,  
And with the evening cloud,  
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my open breast.  
(Those peerless flowers which in the rudest wind  
Never grow sere,  
When rooted in the garden of the mind.  
Because they are the earliest of the year).  
Nor was the night thy shroud.  
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest  
Thou leddest by the hand thine infant Hope.

The eddying of her garments caught from thee  
 The light of thy great presence ; and the cope  
     Of the half-attain'd futurity,  
     Though deep not fathomless,  
 Was cloven with the million stars which tremble  
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.  
 Small thought was there of life's distress ;  
 For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could dull  
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and beautiful :  
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,  
 Listening the lordly music flowing from  
     The illimitable years.  
 Oh strengthen me, enlighten me !  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## IV.

Come forth I charge thee, arise,  
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad eyes !  
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunting vines  
     Unto mine inner eye,  
     Divinest memory !

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall  
Which ever sounds and shines  
A pillar of white light upon the wall  
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :  
Come from the woods that belt the gray hill-side,  
The seven elms, the poplars four  
That stand beside my father's door,  
And chiefly from the brook that loves  
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,  
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,  
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,  
In every elbow and turn,  
The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.  
O ! hither lead thy feet !  
Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat  
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled folds,  
Upon the ridged wolds,  
When the first matin-song hath waken'd loud  
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
What time the amber morn  
Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung cloud.

v.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
To the young spirit present  
When first she is wed ;  
And like a bride of old  
In triumph led,  
With music and sweet showers  
Of festal flowers,  
Unto the dwelling she must sway.  
Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,  
In setting round thy first experiment  
With royal frame-work of wrought gold ;  
Needs must thou dearly love thy first essay,  
And foremost in thy various gallery  
Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls  
Upon the storied walls ;  
For the discovery  
And newness of thine art so pleased thee,  
That all which thou hast drawn of fairest  
Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
With thee unto the love thou bearest  
The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,

Ever retiring thou dost gaze  
On the prime labour of thine early days :  
No matter what the sketch might be ;  
Whether the high field on the bushless Pike,  
Or even a sand-built ridge  
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
Overblown with murmurs harsh,  
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see  
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,  
Where from the frequent bridge,  
Like emblems of infinity,  
The trenched waters run from sky to sky :  
Or a garden bower'd close  
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,  
Long alleys falling down to twilight grots.  
Or opening upon level plots  
Of crowned lilies, standing near  
Purple-spiked lavender :  
Whither in after life retired  
From brawling storms,  
From weary wind,  
With youthful fancy reinspired.

We may hold converse with all forms  
Of the many-sided mind,  
And those whom passion hath not blinded.  
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.  
My friend, with you to live alone,  
Methinks were better than to own  
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne.  
O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

S O N G.



I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :  
    To himself he talks ;  
For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh  
    In the walks ;  
    Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks  
Of the mouldering flowers :  
    Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
    Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
    Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.



## II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose  
    An hour before death ;  
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves  
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves.  
    And the breath  
    Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
And the year's last rose.  
    Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
    Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
    Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

ADELINE.



MYSTERY of mysteries,  
Faintly smiling Adeline,  
Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
But beyond expression fair  
With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
Take the heart from out my breast.  
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

Whence that aery bloom of thine,  
Like a lily which the sun  
Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
And a rose-bush leans upon.

Thou that faintly smilest still,  
As a Naiad in a well,  
Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
Of a maiden past away,  
Ere the placid lips be cold ?  
Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline ?

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?  
Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?  
For sure thou art not all alone :  
Do beating hearts of salient springs  
Keep measure with thine own ?  
Hast thou heard the butterflies  
What they say betwixt their wings ?  
Or in stillest evenings  
With what voice the violet woos  
To his heart the silver dews ?

Or when little airs arise,  
How the merry bluebell rings  
    To the mosses underneath ?  
    Hast thou look'd upon the breath  
    Of the lilies at sunrise ?  
Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
    Some spirit of a crimson rose  
    In love with thee forgets to close  
    His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
All night long on darkness blind.  
What aileth thee ? whom waitest thou  
With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
    And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
    Thou faint smiler, Adeline ?

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
    When thou gazest at the skies ?

Doth the low-tongued Orient  
Wander from the side o' the morn,  
Dripping with Sabæan spice  
On thy pillow, lowly bent  
With melodious airs lovelorn,  
Breathing Light against thy face,  
While his locks a-dropping twined  
Round thy neck in subtle ring  
Make a carcanet of rays,  
And ye talk together still,  
In the language wherewith Spring  
Letters cowslips on the hill ?  
Hence that look and smile of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline.

## A CHARACTER.



i.

WITH a half-glance upon the sky  
At night he said, “ The wanderings  
Of this most intricate Universe  
Teach me the nothingness of things.”  
Yet could not all creation pierce  
Beyond the bottom of his eye.

ii.

He spake of beauty : that the dull  
Saw no divinity in grass,  
Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;  
Then looking as ’twere in a glass,  
He smooth’d his chin and sleek’d his hair,  
And said the earth was beautiful.

## III.

He spake of virtue : not the gods  
More purely, when they wish to charm  
Pallas and Juno sitting by :  
And with a sweeping of the arm,  
And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,  
Devolved his rounded periods.

## IV.

Most delicately hour by hour  
He canvass'd human mysteries,  
And trod on silk, as if the winds  
Blew his own praises in his eyes,  
And stood aloof from other minds  
In impotence of fancied power.

## V.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,  
Himself unto himself he sold :  
Upon himself himself did feed :  
Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,  
And other than his form of creed,  
With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

## THE POET.

---

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above :  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,  
He saw thro' his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he threaded  
The secret'st walks of fame :  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were headed  
And wing'd with flame,



Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,  
    And of so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
    Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore  
    Them earthward till they lit ;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,  
    The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth anew  
    Where'er they fell, behold,  
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew  
    A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling  
    The winged shafts of truth,  
To throng with stately blooms the breathing spring  
    Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,  
    Though one did fling the fire.  
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many dreams  
    Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world  
    Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd,  
    Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise  
    Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burning eyes  
    Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes  
    Sunn'd by those orient skies ;  
But round about the circles of the globes  
    Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame

WISDOM, a name to shake

All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.

And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,

And as the lightning to the thunder

Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,

Making earth wonder.

So was their meaning to her words. No sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,

But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word

She shook the world.

## THE POET'S MIND.



I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind  
With thy shallow wit :  
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;  
For thou can'st not fathom it.  
Clear and bright it should be ever,  
Flowing like a crystal river :  
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear :  
All the place is holy ground ;  
Hollow smile and frozen sneer  
Come not here.

Holy water will I pour

Into every spicy flower

Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.

The flowers would faint at your cruel cheer.

In your eye there is death,

There is frost in your breath

Which would blight the plants.

Where you stand you cannot hear

From the groves within

The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry bird chants,

It would fall to the ground if you came in.

In the middle leaps a fountain

Like sheet lightning,

Ever brightening

With a low melodious thunder ;

All day and all night it is ever drawn

From the brain of the purple mountain

Which stands in the distance yonder :

It springs on a level of bowery lawn,

And the mountain draws it from Heaven above,

And it sings a song of undying love ;

And yet, though its voice be so clear and full,  
You never would hear it—your ears are so dull ;  
So keep where you are : you are foul with sin ;  
It would shrink to the earth if you came in.

## THE DYING SWAN.

---

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
Which had built up everywhere  
    An under-roof of doleful gray.  
With an inner voice the river ran.  
A down it floated a dying swan,  
    Which loudly did lament.  
It was the middle of the day.  
    Ever the weary wind went on,  
    And took the reed-tops as it went.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
And white against the cold-white sky,  
Shone out their crowning snows.

One willow over the river wept,  
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ;  
Above in the wind was the swallow,  
Chasing itself at its own wild will,  
And far thro' the marish green and still  
The tangled water-courses slept,  
Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul  
Of that waste place with joy  
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
The warble was low, and full and clear ;  
And floating about the under-sky,  
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach stole  
Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear :  
But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
With a music strange and manifold,  
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold :  
As when a mighty people rejoice  
With shawms, and with cymbals, and harps of gold,  
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd



Through the open gates of the city afar,  
To the shepherd who watcheth the evening star.  
And the creeping mosses and clambering weeds,  
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,  
And the wavy swell of the souging reeds,  
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,  
And the silvery marish-flowers that throng  
The desolate creeks and pools among,  
Were flooded over with eddying song.

## A DIRGE.



I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;  
Fold thy palms across thy breast,  
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.

Let them rave.

Shadows of the silver birk  
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
Nothing but the small cold worm  
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
Chaunteth not the brooding bee  
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head  
From the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
The woodbine and eglatere  
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.

Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## v.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble-roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave.

These in every shower creep  
Through the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## vi.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;  
The frail bluebell peereth over  
Rare broidry of the purple clover.

Let them rave.

Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## VII.

Wild words wander here and there ;  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy memory confused—

But let them rave.

The balm-cricket carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## LOVE AND DEATH.

---

WHAT time the mighty moon was gathering light  
Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,  
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;  
When, turning round a cassia, full in view  
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,  
And talking to himself, first met his sight :  
“ You must begone,” said Death, “ these walks are mine.”  
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans for flight ;  
Yet ere he parted said, “ This hour is thine :  
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the tree  
Stands in the sun and shadows all beneath,  
So in the light of great eternity  
Life eminent creates the shade of death ;  
The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall,  
But I shall reign for ever over all.”

THE  
BALLAD OF ORIANA.

—◆—  
My heart is wasted with my woe,

Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,

Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with snow,  
And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow.

Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,

Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,

Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,

Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,

We heard the steeds to battle going,

Oriana ;

Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,

Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,

Oriana,

Ere I rode into the fight.

Oriana,

While blissful tears blinded my sight

By star-shine and by moonlight,

Oriana,

I to thee my troth did plight,

Oriana.



She stood upon the castle wall,

Oriana :

She watch'd my crest among them all,

Oriana :

She saw me fight, she heard me call,

When forth there stept a foeman tall.

Oriana,

Atween me and the castle wall,

Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,

Oriana :

The false, false arrow went aside,

Oriana :

The damned arrow glanced aside,

And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride.

Oriana !

Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,

Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space.

Oriana.

Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,

Oriana.

Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,

The battle deepen'd in its place,

Oriana ;

But I was down upon my face,

Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay.

Oriana !

How could I rise and come away,

Oriana !

How could I look upon the day ?

They should have stabb'd me where I lay.

Oriana—

They should have trod me into clay,

Oriana.

Oh ! breaking heart that will not break,

Oriana ;

Oh ! pale, pale face so sweet and meek,

Oriana.

Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,

And then the tears run down my cheek,

Oriana :

What wantest thou ? whom dost thou seek,

Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,

Oriana.

Thou comest atween me and the skies,

Oriana.

I feel the tears of blood arise

Up from my heart unto my eyes,

Oriana.

Within thy heart my arrow lies.

Oriana.

Oh cursed hand ! oh cursed blow !

Oriana !

Oh happy thou that liest low,

Oriana !

All night the silence seems to flow

Beside me in my utter woe,

Oriana.

A weary, weary way I go,

Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea

Oriana,

I walk, I dare not think of thee,

Oriana.

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,

I dare not die and come to thee,

Oriana.

I hear the roaring of the sea,

Oriana.

## CIRCUMSTANCE.



Two children in two neighbour villages  
Playing mad pranks along the heathy leas ;  
Two strangers meeting at a festival ;  
Two lovers whispering by an orchard wall ;  
Two lives bound fast in one with golden ease ;  
Two graves grass-green beside a gray church-tower,  
Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blossomed ;  
Two children in one hamlet born and bred ;  
So runs the round of life from hour to hour.

THE MERMAN.



WHO would be  
A merman bold  
Sitting alone,  
Singing alone  
Under the sea,  
With a crown of gold,  
On a throne ?

I would be a merman bold ;  
I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;  
I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of power ;  
But at night I would roam abroad and play

With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,  
Dressing their hair with the white sea-flower :  
And holding them back by their flowing locks  
I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
    Laughingly, laughingly ;  
And then we would wander away, away  
To the pale-green sea-groves straight and high.  
    Chasing each other merrily.

There would be neither moon nor star :  
But the wave would make music above us afar—  
Low thunder and light in the magic night—  
    Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,  
Call to each other and whoop and cry  
    All night, merrily, merrily ;  
They would pelt me with starry spangles and shells,  
Laughing and clapping their hands between.  
    All night, merrily, merrily :  
But I would throw to them back in mine  
Turkis and agate and almondine :

Then leaping out upon them unseen  
I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh ! what a happy life were mine  
Under the hollow-hung ocean green !  
Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;  
We would live merrily, merrily.



## THE MERMAID.



WHO would be  
A mermaid fair,  
Singing alone,  
T<sup>r</sup> Combing her hair,  
Under the sea.  
In a golden curl  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne ?

I would be a mermaid fair ;  
I would sing to myself the whole of the day ;  
With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair ;  
And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,  
“ Who is it loves me ? who loves not me ? ”  
I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall,

Low adown, low adown,  
From under my starry sea-bud crown  
Low adown and around,  
And I should look like a fountain of gold  
Springing alone  
With a shrill inner sound,  
Over the throne  
In the midst of the hall ;  
Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps  
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate  
With his large calm eyes for the love of me.  
And all the mermen under the sea  
Would feel their immortality  
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

But at night I would wander away, away,  
I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,  
And lightly vault from the throne and play  
With the mermen in and out of the rocks ;

We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,  
On the broad sea-wolds i' the crimson shells,  
Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.  
But if any came near I would call, and shriek,  
And adown the steep like a wave I would leap  
From the diamond-ledges that jut from the dells ;  
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list,  
Of the bold merry mermen under the sea ;  
They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me,  
In the purple twilights under the sea ;  
But the king of them all would carry me,  
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
In the branching jaspers under the sea ;  
Then all the dry pied things that be  
In the hueless mosses under the sea  
Would curl round my silver feet silently,  
All looking up for the love of me.  
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
All things that are forked, and horned, and soft  
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,  
All looking down for the love of me.

## SONNET TO J. M. K.



My hope and heart is with thee—thou wilt be  
A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
To scare church-harpies from the master's feast ;  
Our dusted velvets have much need of thee :  
Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,  
Distill'd from some worm-canker'd homily ;  
But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy  
To embattail and to wall about thy cause  
With iron-worded proof, hating to hark  
The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone  
Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-out clerk  
Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from a throne  
Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the dark  
Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and mark.

P O E M S.

(PUBLISHED 1832.)



## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.



### PART I.

ON either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky :  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
    To many-tower'd Camelot :  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
    The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver

Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
    Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
    The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses ; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
    Skimming down to Camelot .  
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?  
Or at the casement seen her stand ?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
    The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly  
    Down to tower'd Camelot :



And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers, " 'Tis the fairy  
Lady of Shalott."

---

## PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year.



Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed ;  
“ I am half-sick of shadows,” said  
    The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley sheaves,  
The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
    Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A redcross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
    Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see

Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
    As he rode down to Camelot :  
And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armour rung,  
    Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
    As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often thro' the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
    Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse tro'

From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.

From the bank and from the river  
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
"Tirra lirra," by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces thro' the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.

Out flew the web and floated wide ;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;  
"The curse is come upon me," cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining

Over tower'd Camelot ;

Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote

*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse—  
Like some bold seër in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance

Did she look to Camelot.

And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot :

And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,

The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;

For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,

The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,

A gleaming shape she floated by,  
A corse between the houses high,  
    Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name.

*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this ? and what is here ?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer ;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
    All the knights at Camelot :  
But Lancelot mused a little space ;  
He said, " She has a lovely face ;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
    The Lady of Shalott."



## MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

---

I.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
The house thro' all the level shines,  
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
And silent in its dusty vines :  
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
An empty river-bed before,  
And shallows on a distant shore,  
In glaring sand and inlets bright.  
But "Ave Mary," made she moan,  
And "Ave Mary," night and morn,  
And "Ah," she sang. "to be all alone,  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

## ii.

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
From brow and bosom slowly down  
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
Her streaming curls of deepest brown  
To left and right, and made appear,  
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
Her melancholy eyes divine,  
The home of woe without a tear.  
And "Ave Mary," was her moan,  
"Madonna, sad is night and morn :"  
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone.  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

## iii.

Till all the crimson changed, and past  
Into deep orange o'er the sea,  
Low on her knees herself she cast,  
Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;

Complaining, "Mother, give me grace

To help me of my weary load."

And on the liquid mirror glow'd

The clear perfection of her face.

"Is this the form," she made her moan,

"That won his praises night and morn?"

And "Ah," she said, "but I wake alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."

IV.

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,

Nor any cloud would cross the vault,

But day increased from heat to heat,

On stony drought and steaming salt ;

Till now at noon she slept again,

And seem'd knee-deep in mountain grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,

And runlets babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower moan,  
And murmuring, as at night and morn,  
She thought, " My spirit is here alone,  
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

## v.

Dreaning, she knew it was a dream :  
She felt he was and was not there.  
She woke : the babble of the stream  
Fell, and without the steady glare  
Shrank the sick olive sere and small.  
The river-bed was dusty white ;  
And all the furnace of the light  
Struck up against the blinding wall.  
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan  
More inward than at night or morn,  
" Sweet Mother, let me not here alone  
Live forgotten and die forlorn."

## VI.

And, rising, from her bosom drew  
Old letters, breathing of her worth,  
For "Love," they said, "must needs be true,  
To what is loveliest upon earth."  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look at her with slight, and say,  
"But now thy beauty flows away,  
So be alone for evermore."  
"O cruel heart," she changed her tone,  
"And cruel love, whose end is scorn,  
Is this the end to be left alone,  
To live forgotten, and die forlorn!"

## VII.

But sometimes in the falling day  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look into her eyes and say,  
"But thou shalt be alone no more."

And flaming downward over all  
From heat to heat the day decreased,  
And slowly rounded to the east  
The one black shadow from the wall.  
“ The day to night,” she made her moan,  
“ The day to night, the night to morn,  
And day and night I am left alone  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.”

## VIII.

At eve a dry cicala sung,  
There came a sound as of the sea ;  
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,  
And lean'd upon the balcony.  
There all in spaces rosy-bright  
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,  
And deepening thro' the silent spheres,  
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.

And weeping then she made her moan,

‘ The night comes on that knows not morn.

When I shall cease to be all alone,

To live forgotten, and love forlorn.’

ELEANORE.

---

THY dark eyes open'd not,  
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English air,  
For there is nothing here,  
Which, from the outward to the inward brought,  
Moulded thy baby thought.  
Far off from human neighbourhood,  
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,  
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd  
With breezes from our oaken glades,  
But thou wert nursed in some delicious land  
Of lavish lights, and floating shades :  
And flattering thy childish thought  
The oriental fairy brought,



At the moment of thy birth,  
From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
And the hearts of purple hills,  
And shadow'd coves on a sunny shore,  
The choicest wealth of all the earth,  
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

Or the yellow-banded bees,  
Thro' half-open lattices  
Coming in the scented breeze,  
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,  
With whitest honey in fairy gardens cull'd—  
A glorious child, dreaming alone,  
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,  
With the hum of swarming bees  
Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

Who may minister to thee ?  
Summer herself should minister  
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded  
On golden salvers, or it may be,

Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and blinded  
     With many a deep-hued bell-like flower  
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
     Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
     And the crag that fronts the Even,  
         All along the shadowing shore,  
 Crimsons over an inland mere,  
         Eleänore !

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
     How may measured words adore  
         The full-flowing harmony  
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
         Eleänore ?  
     The luxuriant symmetry  
 Of thy floating gracefulness,  
         Eleänore ?  
     Every turn and glance of thine,  
     Every lineament divine,  
         Eleänore,

And the steady sunset glow,  
 That stays upon thee ? For in thee  
     Is nothing sudden, nothing single ;  
 Like two streams of incense free  
     From one censer, in one shrine,  
     Thought and motion mingle,  
 Mingle ever. Motions flow  
 To one another, even as though  
 They were modulated so  
     To an unheard melody,  
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep  
     Of richest pauses, evermore  
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep ;  
     Who may express thee, Eleänore ?

I stand before thee, Eleänore ;  
     I see thy beauty gradually unfold,  
 Daily and hourly, more and more,  
 I muse, as in a trance, the while  
     Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,  
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.

I muse, as in a trance, whene'er  
    The languors of thy love-deep eyes  
Float on to me. I would I were  
    So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies.  
To stand apart, and to adore,  
Gazing on thee for evermore,  
Serene, imperial Eleänore !

Sometimes, with most intensity  
Gazing, I seem to see  
Thought folded over thought, smiling asleep.  
Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,  
I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
But am as nothing in its light :  
As though a star, in inmost heaven set.  
Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
Should slowly round his orb, and slowly grow  
To a full face, there like a sun remain  
Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
    And draw itself to what it was before :  
    So full, so deep, so slow.

Thought seems to come and go  
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,

Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,  
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere.

Grow golden all about the sky :

In thee all passion becomes passionless,

Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,

Losing his fire and active might

In a silent meditation,

Falling into a still delight,

And luxury of contemplation :

As waves that up a quiet cove

Rolling slide, and lying still

Shadow forth the banks at will ;

Or sometimes they swell and move,

Pressing up against the land,

With motions of the outer sea ·

And the self-same influence

Controlleth all the soul and sense

Of Passion gazing upon thee.

His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love.  
Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
Droops both his wings, regarding thee,  
And so would languish evermore.  
Serene, imperial Eleänore.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses unconfined.  
While the amorous, odorous wind  
Breathes low between the sunset and the moon  
Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
On silken cushions half reclined,  
I watch thy grace ; and in its place  
My heart a charmed slumber keeps.  
While I muse upon thy face :  
And a languid fire creeps  
Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
Dissolvingly and slowly : soon  
From thy rose-red lips my name  
Floweth ; then, as in a swoon,  
With dinning sound my ears are rife.  
My tremulous tongue faltereth,

I lose my colour, I lose my breath.

I drink the cup of a costly death,

Brimm'd with delirious draughts of warmest life.

I die with my delight, before

I hear what I would hear from thee :

Yet tell my name again to me,

I *would* be dying evermore.

So dying ever, Eleänore.

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.



I SEE the wealthy miller yet,  
His double chin, his portly size,  
And who that knew him could forget  
The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?  
The slow wise smile that, round about  
His dusty forehead drily curl'd,  
Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
And full of dealings with the world !

In yonder chair I see him sit,  
Three fingers round the old silver cup—  
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
At his own jest—gray eyes lit up



With summer lightnings of a soul  
So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole.  
His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :  
My own sweet Alice, we must die.  
There 's somewhat in this world amiss  
Shall be unriddled by and by.  
There 's somewhat flows to us in life,  
But more is taken quite away.  
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth ?  
I least should breathe a thought of pain.  
Would God renew me from my birth  
I'd almost live my life again.  
So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
And once again to woo thee mine—  
It seems in after-dinner talk  
Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy  
    Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
Where this old mansion mounted high  
    Looks down upon the village spire :  
For even here, where I and you  
    Have lived and loved alone so long,  
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
    By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove  
    In firry woodlands making moan :  
But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
    I had no motion of my own.  
For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
    Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—  
Still hither thither idly sway'd  
    Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear  
    The milldam rushing down with noise.  
And see the minnows everywhere  
    In crystal eddies glance and poise.

The tall flag-flowers, where they sprung  
    Below the range of stepping-stones,  
And those three chestnuts near, that hung  
    In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that.  
    When after roving in the woods  
( 'Twas April then), I came and sat  
    Below the chestnuts, when their buds  
Were glistening to the breezy blue ;  
    And on the slope, an absent fool,  
I cast me down, nor thought of you.  
    But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read.  
    An echo from a measured strain,  
Beat time to nothing in my head  
    From some odd corner of the brain.  
It haunted me, the morning long,  
    With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
The phantom of a silent song,  
    That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
I watch'd the little circles die ;  
They past into the level flood,  
And there a vision caught my eye ;  
The reflex of a beauteous form,  
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
That morning, on the casement's edge  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning from the ledge :  
And when I raised my eyes, above  
They met with two so full and bright—  
Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,  
That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
That I should die an early death :  
For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.

My mother thought, What ails the boy ?

For I was alter'd, and began  
To move about the house with joy,  
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam  
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
The sleepy pool above the dam,  
The pool beneath it never still,  
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
The dark round of the dripping wheel,  
The very air about the door  
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
When April nights began to blow,  
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
I saw the village lights below ;  
I knew your taper far away,  
And full at heart of trembling hope,  
From off the wold I came, and lay  
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;  
    And "by that lamp," I thought, "she sits!"  
The white chalk-quarry from the hill  
    Glean'd to the flying moon by fits.  
"O that I were beside her now !  
    O will she answer if I call ?  
O would she give me vow for vow,  
    Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;  
    And, in the pauses of the wind,  
Sometimes I heard you sing within ;  
    Sometimes your shadow cross'd the blind ;  
At last you rose and moved the light,  
    And the long shadow of the chair  
Flitted across into the night,  
    And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,  
    The lanes, you know, were white with may :  
Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek  
    Flush'd like the coming of the day ;

And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,

    You would, and would not, little one !

Although I pleaded tenderly,

    And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought

    To yield consent to my desire :

She wish'd me happy, but she thought

    I might have look'd a little higher ;

And I was young—too young to wed :

    " Yet must I love her for your sake :

Go fetch your Alice here," she said :

    Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride :

    But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;

This dress and that by turns you tried,

    Too fearful that you should not please.

I loved you better for your fears,

    I knew you could not look but well ;

And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,

    I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,  
The doubt my mother would not see ;  
She spoke at large of many things,  
And at the last she spoke of me ;  
And turning look'd upon your face.  
As near this door you sat apart.  
And rose, and, with a silent grace  
Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song  
I gave you, Alice, on the day  
When, arm in arm, we went along,  
A pensive pair, and you were gay  
With bridal flowers—that I may seem.  
As in the nights of old, to lie  
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,  
While those full chestnuts whisper by.

---

It is the miller's daughter,  
And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
That I would be the jewel  
That trembles at her ear :



For hid in ringlets day and night,  
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle  
About her dainty dainty waist,  
And her heart would beat against me,  
In sorrow and in rest :  
And I should know if it beat right,  
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,  
And all day long to fall and rise  
Upon her balmy bosom,  
With her laughter or her sighs,  
And I would lie so light, so light,  
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet ! which true love spells—  
True love interprets—right alone.  
His light upon the letter dwells,  
For all the spirit is his own.

So, if I waste words now, in truth  
    You must blame Love. His early rage  
Had force to make me rhyme in youth,  
    And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
    Like mine own life to me thou art,  
Where Past and Present, wound in one,  
    Do make a garland for the heart :  
So sing that other song I made,  
    Half-anger'd with my happy lot,  
The day, when in the chestnut shade  
    I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net,  
Can he pass, and we forget ?  
Many suns arise and set,  
Many a chance the years beget.  
Love the gift is Love the debt.  
    Even so,  
Love is hurt with jar and fret.  
Love is made a vague regret.

Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
Idle habit links us yet.  
What is love ? for we forget :  
Ah, no ! no !

---

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True wife,  
Round my true heart thine arms entwine ;  
My other dearer life in life,  
Look thro' my very soul with thine !  
Untouch'd with any shade of years,  
May those kind eyes for ever dwell !  
They have not shed a many tears,  
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed : they had their part  
Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,  
The still affection of the heart  
Became an outward breathing type,  
That into stillness past again,  
And left a want unknown before ;  
Although the loss that brought us pain,  
That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee :  
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought  
Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
To yon old mill across the wolds ;  
For look, the sunset, south and north,  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,  
And fires your narrow casement glass.  
Touching the sullen pool below :  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

## FATIMA.



i.

O LOVE, Love, Love ! O withering might !  
O sun, that from thy noonday height  
Shudderest when I strain my sight,  
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and blind,  
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

ii.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
Below the city's eastern towers :  
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers :  
I rolled among the tender flowers :  
I crush'd them on my breast, my mouth :  
I look'd athwart the burning drouth  
Of that long desert to the south.

## III.

Last night, when some one spoke his name,  
 From my swift blood that went and came  
 A thousand little shafts of flame  
 Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.

O Love, O fire ! once he drew  
 With one long kiss my whole soul thro'  
 My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

## IV.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
 He cometh quickly : from below  
 Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow  
 Before him, striking on my brow.

In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
 Down-deepening from swoon to swoon.  
 Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

## V.

The wind sounds like a silver wire.  
 And from beyond the noon a fire  
 Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher  
 The skies stoop down in their desire :

And, isled in sudden seas of light,  
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce delight,  
Bursts into blossom in his sight.

## VI.

My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky.  
Droops blinded with his shining eye:  
I *will* possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

## ŒNONE.



THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,  
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine.  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand  
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars  
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine  
In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning : but in front  
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.



Hither came at noon

Mournful Enone, wandering forlorn  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck  
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,  
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade  
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

“ O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.  
The purple flowers droop : the golden bee  
Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,  
And I am all aweary of my life.

“ O mother Ida, many-fountain’d Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Hear me O Earth, hear me O Hills, O Caves  
 That house the cold crown’d snake! O mountain brooks,  
 I am the daughter of a River-God,  
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
 A cloud that gather’d shape : for it may be  
 That, while I speak of it, a little while  
 My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

“ O mother Ida, many-fountain’d Ida.  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 I waited underneath the dawning hills.  
 Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :  
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn’d, white-hooved,  
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

“ O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Far-off the torrent call’d me from the cleft :

Far up the solitary morning smote  
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes  
 I sat alone : white-breasted like a star  
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard skin  
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair  
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :  
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens  
 When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart  
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm  
 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech  
 Came down upon my heart.

“ ‘ My own Ænone,  
 Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,  
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n  
 ‘ For the most fair,’ would seem to award it thine,  
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt

The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,  
And added ‘ This was cast upon the board,  
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus ; whereupon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom ’twere due :  
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Here comes to-day  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight : one silvery cloud  
Had lost his way between the piney sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,  
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,  
 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
 Lotos and lilies : and a wind arose,  
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,  
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

    .. O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and lean'd  
 Upon him. slowly dropping fragrant dew.  
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom  
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows  
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
 Wherewith to embellish state, ' from many a vale  
 And river-sunder'd champaign cloth'd with corn,  
 Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.

Honour,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,  
 From many an inland town and haven large,  
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel  
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

“ O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,  
 ‘ Which in all action is the end of all ;  
 Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-bred  
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns  
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,  
 From me, Heaven’s Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,  
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power  
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain’d  
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.’

“ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit

Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power  
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood  
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear  
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye  
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek  
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

“ · Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.

These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

Yet not for power, (power of herself

Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,

Acting the law we live by without fear ;

And, because right is right, to follow right

Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.’

“ Dear mother Ila, harken ere I die.

Again she said : · I woo thee not with gifts.

Sequel of guerdon could not alter me

To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am.

So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,

If gazing on divinity disrobed  
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,  
 Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure  
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,  
 So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,  
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,  
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,  
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow  
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,  
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
 Commeasure perfect freedom.'

“ Here she ceased,

And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, ‘ O Paris,  
 Give it to Pallas !’ but he heard me not,  
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

“ O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,



With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair  
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
 And shoulder : from the violets her light foot  
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form  
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

“ Dear mother **Ida**, harken ere **I** die.  
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,  
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, ‘ **I** promise thee  
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.’  
 She spoke and laugh'd : **I** shut my sight for fear :  
 But when **I** look'd, Paris had raised his arm,  
 And **I** beheld great **Here's** angry eyes,  
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
 And **I** was left alone within the bower ;  
 And from that time to this **I** am alone,  
 And **I** shall be alone until **I** die.

“ Yet, mother **Ida**, harken ere **I** die.  
 Fairest—why fairest wife ? am **I** not fair ?

My love hath told me so a thousand times.  
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,  
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail  
 Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most loving is she ?  
 Ah me. my mountain shepherd, that my arms  
 Were wound about thee. and my hot lips prest  
 Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew  
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains  
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

" O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
 They came. they cut away my tallest pines,  
 My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge  
 High over the blue gorge, and all between  
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
 Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath  
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn  
 The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat  
 Low in the valley. Never, never more  
 Shall lone Cenone see the morning mist  
 Sweep thro' them ; never see them overlaid

With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

“ O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,  
The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change ; that I might speak my mind.  
And tell her to her face how much I hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

“ O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone ?  
Seal'd it with kisses ? water'd it with tears ?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to these !  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face ?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight ?

O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live :  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids : let me die.

“ O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born : her child !—a shudder comes  
Across me : never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes !

“ O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone.

Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of Death  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth  
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
What this may be I know not, but I know  
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,  
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

## THE SISTERS.



I.

WE were two daughters of one race :  
She was the fairest in the face :  
    The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
They were together, and she fell :  
Therefore revenge became me well.  
    O the Earl was fair to see !

II.

She died : she went to burning flame :  
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.  
    The wind is howling in turret and tree.  
Whole weeks and months, and early and late,  
To win his love I lay in wait :  
    O the Earl was fair to see !

## III.

I made a feast ; I bad him come :

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he laid his head :

O the Earl was fair to see !

## IV.

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :

His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,

But I loved his beauty passing well.

O the Earl was fair to see !

## V.

I rose up in the silent night :

I made my dagger sharp and bright.

The wind is raving in turret and tree.

As half-asleep his breath he drew,

Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.

O the Earl was fair to see !

## VI.

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
He look'd so grand when he was dead.

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
And laid him at his mother's feet.

O the Earl was fair to see !



TO \_\_\_\_\_

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.



I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
(For you will understand it) of a soul,  
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,  
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain.  
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen  
In all varieties of mould and mind)  
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if Good,  
Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are three sisters  
That doat upon each other, friends to man,  
Living together under the same roof.  
And never can be sunder'd without tears.

And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be  
 Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie  
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for this  
 Was common clay ta'en from the common earth,  
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with the tears  
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,  
 Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass,  
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
 From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf  
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
 My soul would live alone unto herself  
 In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round," I said,  
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stedfast shade  
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily :  
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,  
 So royal-rich and wide."

\* \* \* \*

Four courts I made, East, West and South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth  
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a row  
Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,  
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
That lent broad verge to distant lands,  
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky  
Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell  
Across the mountain stream'd below  
In misty folds, that floating as they fell  
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd  
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, " And who shall gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise ? "

For that sweet incense rose and never fail'd,  
 And, while day sank or mounted higher,  
 The light aërial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd and traced,  
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires  
 From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,  
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

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Full of long sounding corridors it was,  
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul did pass,  
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,  
All various, each a perfect whole  
From living Nature, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and blue,  
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter blew  
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,  
And some one pacing there alone,  
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,  
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.  
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall  
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves.  
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low.  
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind  
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
And hoary to the wind.

And one, a foreground black with stones and slags.  
Beyond a line of heights, and higher  
All barr'd with long white cloud the scornful crags,  
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored.  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,  
 As fit for every mood of mind,  
 Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there,  
 Not less than truth design'd.

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Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
 In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
 Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx  
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
 Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily ;  
 An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,  
 A group of Houris bow'd to see  
 The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes  
 That said, We wait for thee.



Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
In some fair space of sloping greens  
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
To list a footfall, ere he saw  
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Tuscan king to hear  
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
And many a tract of palm and rice,  
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd  
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'd  
From off her shoulder backward borne :  
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one hand grasp'd  
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh  
 Half-buried in the Eagle's down,  
 Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
 Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair  
 Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
 Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,  
 Not less than life, design'd.

\* \* \* \*

Then in the towers I placed great bells that swung,  
 Moved of themselves, with silver sound ;  
 And with choice paintings of wise men I hung  
 The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,  
 Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild ;  
 And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd his song,  
 And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest :

A million wrinkles carved his skin ;

A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,

From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set

Many an arch high up did lift,

And angels rising and descending met

With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd

With cycles of the human tale

Of this wide world, the times of every land

So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,

Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and stings :

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro

The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind  
All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick man declined,  
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those great bells  
Began to chime. She took her throne :  
She sat betwixt the shining oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost oriels' colour'd flame  
Two godlike faces gazed below :  
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,  
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion were  
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd fair  
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,  
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon, drew  
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song  
Throb thro' the ribbed stone.

Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,  
Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,  
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these are mine,  
And let the world have peace or wars,  
'Tis one to me." She—when young night divine  
Crown'd dying day with stars.

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—

Lit light in wreaths and anadems,

And pure quintessences of precious oils

In hollow'd moons of gems.

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands and cried,

“ I marvel if my still delight

In this great house so royal-rich, and wide.

Be flatter'd to the height.

“ From shape to shape at first within the womb

The brain is modell'd,” she began,

“ And thro' all phases of all thought I come

Into the perfect man.

“ All Nature widens upward. Evermore

The simpler essence lower lies :

More complex is more perfect, owning more

Discourse, more widely wise.”

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,  
 And of the rising from the dead,  
 As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate ;  
 And at the last she said :

“ I take possession of men's minds and deeds.  
 I live in all things great and small.  
 I sit apart holding no forms of creeds,  
 But contemplating all.”

\*            \*            \*            \*  
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Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
 Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
 Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,  
 And intellectual throne

Of full-sphered contemplation. So three years  
 She throve, but on the fourth she fell,  
 Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,  
 Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
    God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of Personality,  
    Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turn'd her sight,  
    The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote "Mene, mene," and divided quite  
    The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude  
    Fell on her, from which mood was born  
Scorn of herself : again, from out that mood  
    Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What ! is not this my place of strength," she said,  
    " My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid  
    Since my first memory ? "



But in dark corners of her palace stood  
    Uncertain shapes, and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood  
    And horrible nightmares.

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,  
    And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,  
    That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light  
    Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,  
Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
    Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand ;  
    Left on the shore ; that hears all night  
The plunging seas draw backward from the land  
    Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw  
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curl'd.  
“No voice,” she shriek'd in that lone hall,  
“No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this world :  
One deep, deep silence all !”

She, mouldering with the dull earth's mouldering sod,  
Inwrapt tenfold in slothful shame,  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally.  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere ;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round  
With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound  
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,  
In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moon-rise hears the low  
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder or a sound  
Of stones thrown down, or one deep cry  
Of great wild beasts : then thinketh, " I have found  
A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, " I am on fire within.

There comes no murmur of reply.

What is it that will take away my sin,

And save me lest I die ?"

So when four years were wholly finished,

She threw her royal robes away.

" Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,

" Where I may mourn and pray.

" Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are

So lightly, beautifully built :

Perchance I may return with others there

When I have purged my guilt."

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.



LADY Clara Vere de Vere,

Of me you shall not win renown ;  
You thought to break a country heart  
For pastime, ere you went to town.  
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled  
I saw the snare, and I retired :  
The daughter of a hundred Earls,  
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

I know you proud to bear your name,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine.  
Too proud to care from whence I came.

Nor would I break for your sweet sake  
 A heart that doats on truer charms.  
 A simple maiden in her flower  
 Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.

Some meeker pupil you must find,  
 For were you queen of all that is,  
 I could not stoop to such a mind.  
 You sought to prove how I could love,  
 And my disdain is my reply.  
 The lion on your old stone gates  
 Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

You put strange memories in my head.  
 Not thrice your branching limes have blown  
 Since I beheld young Laurence dead.  
 Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies :  
 A great enchantress you may be ;  
 But there was that across his throat  
 Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.

When thus he met his mother's view,  
She had the passions of her kind.

She spake some certain truths of you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word

That scarce is fit for you to hear,  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.

There stands a spectre in your hall :  
The guilt of blood is at your door.  
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.  
You held your course without remorse,  
To make him trust his modest worth,  
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,

From you blue heavens above us bent  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.

Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
    'Tis only noble to be good.  
Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
    And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
    You pine among your halls and towers ;  
The languid light of your proud eyes  
    Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,  
    But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
    You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
    If Time be heavy on your hands,  
Are there no beggars at your gate,  
    Nor any poor about your lands ?  
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
    Or teach the orphan-girl to sew.  
Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
    And let the foolish yeoman go.



## THE MAY QUEEN.

I.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother  
dear :

To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad  
New year :

Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest  
day :

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

II.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so  
bright as mine ;

There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :

But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,

So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen  
o' the May.

## III.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,  
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :  
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands  
gay,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## IV.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,  
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?  
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him  
yesterday,—

But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## V.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,  
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.  
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## vi.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can  
never be :

They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that  
to me ?

There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## vii.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,  
And you'll be there too, mother, to see me made the  
Queen :

For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far  
away.

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## viii.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy  
bowers,

And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet  
cuckoo-flowers :

And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps  
and hollows gray,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## ix.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-  
grass,

And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as  
they pass :

There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong  
day,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## x.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,  
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,  
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance  
and play,

For I'm to be Queen of the May, mother, I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## XI.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early,  
mother dear,

To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad  
New-year :

To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day.  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May. mother. I'm to be  
Queen o' the May.

## NEW-YEAR'S EVE.



I.

IF you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.  
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,  
Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more  
of me.

II.

To-night I saw the sun set : he set and left behind  
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace  
of mind ;  
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall  
never see  
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

## III.

Last May we made a crown of flowers : we had a merry  
day ;  
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen  
of May ;  
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel  
copse,  
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white  
chimney-tops.

## IV.

There's not a flower on all the hills : the frost is on the  
pane :  
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again :  
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on  
high :  
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

## V

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy tall elm-tree,  
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea.  
And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er  
the wave,  
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

## VI.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,  
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,  
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,  
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is  
still.

## VII.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the  
waning light  
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;  
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool  
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush  
in the pool.

## VIII.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn  
shade,  
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am  
lowly laid.  
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you  
pass,  
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant  
grass.



## IX.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;  
You'll kiss me, my own mother, upon my cheek and brow ;  
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,  
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another  
child.

## X.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-  
place ;  
Though you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your  
face ;  
Though I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you  
say,  
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

## XI.

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for  
evermore,  
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the  
door ;  
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing  
green :  
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

## XII.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :  
Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden  
more :  
But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-bush that  
I set  
About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

## XIII.

Good-night, sweet mother : call me before the day is born.  
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;  
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,  
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

## CONCLUSION.

— • —

I.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;  
And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.  
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !  
To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's  
here.

II.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,  
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot  
rise,  
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that  
blow,  
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

## III.

It seemed so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,  
And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be  
done !

But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;  
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of  
peace.

## IV.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !  
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me  
there !

O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !  
A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

## V.

He show'd me all the mercy, for he taught me all the sin.  
Now, though my lamp was lighted late, there's One will  
let me in :

Nor would I now be well, mother, again, if that could be,  
For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

## vi.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch  
beat.

There came a sweeter token when the night and morning  
meet :

But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in  
mine,

And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

## vii.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;  
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was  
over all :

The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my  
soul.

## viii.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;  
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;  
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt  
resign'd,

And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

## IX.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,  
 And then did something speak to me—I know not what  
     was said ;  
 For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my  
     mind,  
 And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

## X.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, “ It’s not for them :  
     it’s mine.”  
 And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.  
 And once again it came, and close beside the window-  
     bars,  
 Then seem’d to go right up to Heaven and die among  
     the stars.

## XI.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know  
 The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.  
 And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.  
 But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

## XII.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;  
 There's many worthier than I, would make him happy yet.  
 If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;  
 But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of  
     life.

## XIII.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;  
 He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.  
 And there I move no longer now, and there his light  
     may shine—  
 Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

## XIV.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is  
     done  
 The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond  
     the sun—  
 For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—  
 And what is life, that we should moan ? why make we  
     such ado ?

## xv.

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—

And there to wait a little while till you and Effie  
come—

To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your  
breast—

And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are  
at rest.



## THE LOTOS-EATERS.



### I.

“COURAGE!” he said, and pointed toward the land,  
“This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.”  
In the afternoon they came unto a land,  
In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon ;  
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

### II.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go ;  
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward flow  
From the inner land : far off, three mountain-tops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

## iii.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale  
And meadow, set with slender galingale ;  
A land where all things always seem'd the same !  
And round about the keel with faces pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

## iv.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem.  
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave  
To each, but whoso did receive of them,  
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave

On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,  
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;  
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

## v.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,  
Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;  
And sweet it was to dream of Father-land,  
Of child, and wife, and slave ; but evermore  
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.  
Then some one said, " We will return no more ; "  
And all at once they sang, " Our island home  
Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam."

## CHORIC SONG.

## 1.

There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;  
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes :  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.  
Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

## 2.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from weariness ?  
All things have rest : why should we toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of things.  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :

Nor ever fold our wings,  
 And cease from wanderings  
 Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;  
 Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
 " There is no joy but calm ! "   
 Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things ?

## 3.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,  
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
 With winds upon the branch, and there  
 Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
 Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
 Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow  
 Falls, and floats adown the air.  
 Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
 Drops in a silent autumn night.  
 All its allotted length of days,  
 The flower ripens in its place,  
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,  
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## 4.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life ; ah ! why  
Should life all labour be ?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
To war with evil ? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave  
In silence, ripen, fall and cease :  
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease !

## 5.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream !  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height ;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;  
Eating the Lotos, day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray :  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;  
To muse and brood and live again in memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

## 6.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change ;  
For surely now our household hearths are cold :  
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings  
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.

Is there confusion in the little isle ?  
Let what is broken so remain,  
The Gods are hard to reconcile :  
'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
There *is* confusion worse than death,  
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
Long labour unto aged breath,  
Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars  
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

## 7.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,  
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly,)  
With half-dropt eyelids still,  
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly  
His waters from the purple hill—  
To hear the dewy echoes calling  
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—  
To hear the emerald-colour'd water falling  
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!  
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.



## 8.

The Lotos blooms below the flowery peak :  
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :  
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone :  
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust  
is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,  
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was  
seething free,  
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains  
in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,  
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.  
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are  
hurl'd  
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly  
curl'd  
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming  
world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps  
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and  
praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song  
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,  
Like a tale of little meaning though the words are strong ;  
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,  
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil ;  
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—  
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,  
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore  
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar ;  
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.



i.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,  
    " *The Legend of Good Women*," long ago  
Sung by the morning star of song, who made  
    His music heard below ;

ii.

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath  
    Preluded those melodious bursts, that fill  
The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
    With sounds that echo still.

iii.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art  
    Held me above the subject, as strong gales  
Hold swollen clouds from raining, though my heart,  
    Brimful of those wild tales.

## iv.

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land  
I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand  
The downward slope to death.

## v.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song  
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,  
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,  
And trumpets blown for wars ;

## vi.

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs :  
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries ;  
And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs  
Of marble palaces ;

## vii.

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall  
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;  
Lances in ambush set ;

## VIII.

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts  
That run before the fluttering tongues of fire ;  
White surf wind-scattered over sails and masts,  
And ever climbing higher ;

## IX.

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,  
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,  
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,  
And hush'd seraglios.

## X.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land  
Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,  
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,  
Torn from the fringe of spray.

## XI.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,  
As when a great thought strikes along the brain,  
And flushes all the cheek.

## xii.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
    A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;  
    And then, I know not how,

## xiii.

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought  
    Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep  
Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd, and brought  
    Into the gulfs of sleep.

## xiv.

At last methought that I had wander'd far  
    In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in coolest dew,  
The maiden splendours of the morning star  
    Shook in the stedfast blue.

## xv.

Enormous elm-tree boles did stoop and lean  
    Upon the dusky brushwood underneath  
Their broad curved branches, fledged with clearest green,  
    New from its silken sheath.

## xvi.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,  
And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,  
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,  
Never to rise again.

## xvii.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,  
Not any song of bird or sound of rill :  
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still

## xviii.

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd  
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,  
And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd  
The red anemone.

## xix.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew  
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn  
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew,  
Leading from lawn to lawn.

## XX.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
    Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame  
The times when I remember to have been  
    Joyful and free from blame.

## XXI.

And from within me a clear under-tone  
    Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime :  
“ Pass freely thro' ! the wood is all thine own,  
    Until the end of time.”

## XXII.

At length I saw a lady within call,  
    Stillter than chisell'd marble, standing there ;  
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
    And most divinely fair.

## XXIII.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise  
    Froze my swift speech ; she turning on my face  
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
    Spoke slowly in her place.



## XXIV.

“ I had great beauty : ask thou not my name :

No one can be more wise than destiny.

Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came

I brought calamity.”

## XXV.

“ No marvel, sovereign lady ! in fair field,

Myself for such a face had boldly died,”

I answer'd free, and turning I appeal'd

To one that stood beside.

## XXVI.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,

To her full height her stately stature draws ;

“ My youth,” she said, “ was blasted with a curse :

This woman was the cause.

## XXVII.

“ I was cut off from hope in that sad place,

Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears :

My father held his hand upon his face ;

I, blinded with my tears,

## XXVIII.

“ Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs  
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
 The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,  
 Waiting to see me die.

## XXIX.

“ The tall masts quiver'd as they lay afloat,  
 The temples and the people and the shore ;  
 One drew a sharp knife thro' my tender throat  
 Slowly,—and nothing more.”

## XXX.

Whereto the other with a downward brow :  
 “ I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,  
 Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep below,  
 Then when I left my home.”

## XXXI.

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence drear,  
 As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :  
 Sudden I heard a voice that cried, “ Come here,  
 That I may look on thee.”

## XXXII.

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
 One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd ;  
 A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,  
 Brow-bound with burning gold.

## XXXIII.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began :  
 " I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd  
 All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.  
 Once, like the moon, I made

## XXXIV.

" The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
 According to my humour ebb and flow.  
 I have no men to govern in this wood :  
 That makes my only woe.

## XXXV.

" Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not bend  
 One will ; nor tame and tutor with mine eye  
 That dull cold-blooded Caesar. Prythee, friend,  
 Where is Mark Antony ?

## XXXVI.

“ The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime  
     On Fortune’s neck : we sat as God by God :  
 The Nilus would have risen before his time  
     And flooded at our nod.

## XXXVII.

“ What nights we had in Egypt ! I could hit  
     His humours while I cross’d them : O the life  
 I led him, and the dalliance and the wit,  
     The flattery and the strife,

## XXXVIII.

“ And the wild kiss, when fresh from war’s alarms,  
     My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
 My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,  
     Contented there to die !

## XXXIX.

“ And there he died ; and when I heard my name  
     Sigh’d forth with life I had no further fear :  
 O what a little worm stole Cæsar’s fame !  
     What else was left ? look here !”

## XL.

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
 The polish'd argent of her breast to sight  
 Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a laugh,  
 Showing the aspick's bite.)

## XLI.

" I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found  
 Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,  
 A name for ever!—lying robed and crown'd,  
 Worthy a Roman spouse."

## XLII.

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range  
 Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance  
 From tone to tone, and glided thro' all change  
 Of liveliest utterance.

## XLIII.

When she made pause I knew not for delight ;  
 Because with sudden motion from the ground  
 She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with light  
 The interval of sound.

## XLIV.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest darts ;  
 As once they drew into two burning rings  
 All beams of Love, melting the mighty hearts  
 Of captains and of kings.

## XLV.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
 A noise of some one coming thro' the lawn,  
 And singing clearer than the crested bird.  
 That claps his wings at dawn.

## XLVI.

“ The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
 From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,  
 Sound all night long, in falling thro' the dell,  
 Far-heard beneath the moon.

## XLVII.

“ The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
 Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine :  
 All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell  
 With spires of silver shine.”

## XLVIII.

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves  
 The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the door  
 Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
 Of sound on roof and floor

## XLIX.

Within. and anthem sung, is charm'd and tied  
 To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow  
 Of music left the lips of her that died  
 To save her father's vow ;

## L.

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
 A maiden pure ; as when she went along  
 From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome light,  
 With timbrel and with song.

## LI.

My words leapt forth : “ Heaven heads the count of crimes  
 With that wild oath.” She render'd answer high :  
 “ Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times  
 I would be born and die.

## LII.

“ Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root  
    Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,  
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to fruit  
    Changed, I was ripe for death.

## LIII.

“ My God, my land, my father—these did move  
    Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,  
Lower’d softly with a threefold chord of love  
    Down to a silent grave.

## LIV.

“ And I went mourning, ‘ No fair Hebrew boy  
    Shall smile away my maiden blame among  
The Hebrew mothers’—emptied of all joy,  
    Leaving the dance and song,

## LV.

“ Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
    Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow  
    Beneath the battled tower.



## LVI.

“ The light white cloud swam over us. Anon  
We heard the lion roaring in his den ;  
We saw the large white stars rise one by one,  
Or, from the darken'd glen,

## LVII.

“ Saw God divide the night with flying flame,  
And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became  
A solemn scorn of ills.

## LVIII.

“ When the next moon was roll'd into the sky,  
Strength came to me that equall'd my desire.  
How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire !

## LIX.

“ It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father's will ;  
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
Sweetens the spirit still.

## LX.

“ Moreover it is written that my race

Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer  
On Arnon unto Minneth.” Here her face  
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

## LXI.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where I stood :  
“ Glory to God,” she sang, and past afar,  
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood,  
Toward the morning-star.

## LXII.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
As one that from a casement leans his head,  
When midnight bells cease ringing suddenly,  
And the old year is dead.

## LXIII.

“ Alas ! alas ! ” a low voice, full of care,

Murmur'd beside me : “ Turn and look on me :  
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,  
If what I was I be.

## LXIV.

“ Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor !

O me ! that I should ever see the light !

Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor

Do hunt me. day and night.”

## LXV.

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust :

To whom the Egyptian : “ O, you tamely died !

You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust

The dagger thro' her side.”

## LXVI.

With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery

Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams

Ruled in the eastern sky.

## LXVII.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of Arc,

A light of ancient France ;

## LXVIII.

Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish Death,  
Who kneeling, with one arm about her king,  
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,  
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

## LXIX.

No memory labours longer from the deep  
Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden ore  
That glimpses, moving up, than I from sleep  
To gather and tell o'er

## LXX.

Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain  
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to strike  
Into that wondrous track of dreams again !  
But no two dreams are like.

## LXXI.

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,  
Desiring what is mingled with past years.  
In yearnings that can never be express  
By signs or groans or tears ;

## LXXII.

Because all words, though cull'd with choicest art,

Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,

Wither beneath the palate, and the heart

Faints, faded by its heat.

M A R G A R E T.



O SWEET pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
What lit your eyes with tearful power.  
Like moonlight on a falling shower ?  
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower  
    Of pensive thought and aspect pale,  
    Your melancholy sweet and frail  
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower ?  
From the westward-winding flood,  
From the evening-lighted wood,  
    From all things outward you have won  
A tearful grace, as though you stood  
    Between the rainbow and the sun.

The very smile before you speak.  
That dimples your transparent cheek,  
    Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
The senses with a still delight  
    Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
    Like the tender amber round,  
    Which the moon about her spreadeth,  
Moving thro' a fleecy night.

You love, remaining peacefully.  
    To hear the murmur of the strife,  
    But enter not the toil of life.  
Your spirit is the calmed sea,  
    Laid by the tumult of the fight.  
You are the evening star, always  
    Remaining betwixt dark and bright :  
Lull'd echoes of laborious day  
    Come to you, gleams of mellow light  
    Float by you on the verge of night.

What can it matter, Margaret,  
    What songs below the waning stars

The lion-heart, Plantagenet,  
Sang looking thro' his prison bars ?  
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so well ?

A fairy shield your Genius made  
And gave you on your natal day.  
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,  
Keeps real sorrow far away.  
You move not in such solitudes,  
You are not less divine,  
But more human in your moods.  
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.  
Your hair is darker, and your eyes  
Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue.  
And less ærially blue,  
But ever trembling thro' the dew  
Of dainty-woeful sympathies.



O sweet pale Margaret,

O rare pale Margaret,

    Come down, come down, and hear me speak :

    Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :

The sun is just about to set.

The arching limes are tall and shady,

    And faint, rainy lights are seen,

        Moving in the leavy beech.

Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,

    Where all day long you sit between

        Joy and woe, and whisper each.

Or only look across the lawn,

    Look out below your bower-eaves,

Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn

    Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

## THE BLACKBIRD.

---

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :  
While all the neighbours shoot thee round,  
I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,  
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine ; the range of lawn and park :  
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,  
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, though I spared thee kith and kin,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that gold dagger of thy bill  
To fret the summer jennetin.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,  
Cold February loved, is dry :  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once, when young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to coarse.  
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing  
While yon sun prospers in the blue,  
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,  
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE  
DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.



I.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily sighing :  
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low,  
For the old year lies a-dying.  
    Old year, you must not die :  
    You came to us so readily,  
    You lived with us so steadily,  
    Old year, you shall not die.

## II.

He lieth still : he doth not move :  
He will not see the dawn of day.  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,  
And the New-year will take 'em away.  
    Old year, you must not go ;  
    So long as you have been with us,  
    Such joy as you have seen with us.  
    Old year, you shall not go.

## III.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim :  
A jollier year we shall not see.  
But though his eyes are waxing dim,  
And though his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.  
    Old year, you shall not die ;  
    We did so laugh and cry with you,  
    I've half a mind to die with you.  
    Old year, if you must die.

## IV.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his merry quips are o'er.  
To see him die, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post-haste.  
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.

The night is starry and cold, my friend,  
And the New-year blithe and bold, my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

## V.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro :  
The cricket chirps : the light burns low :  
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.

Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :

What is it we can do for you ?

Speak out before you die.

## VI.

His face is growing sharp and thin.

Alack ! our friend is gone.

Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :

Step from the corpse, and let him in

That standeth there alone,

And waiteth at the door.

There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,

And a new face at the door, my friend,

A new face at the door.

To J. S.

—♦—

i.

THE wind, that beats the mountain, blows  
More softly round the open wold,  
And gently comes the world to those  
That are cast in gentle mould.

ii.

And me this knowledge bolder made,  
Or else I had not dared to flow  
In these words toward you, and invade  
Even with a verse your holy woe.

iii.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs are nursed.  
Fall into shadow, soonest lost :  
Those we love first are taken first.



## iv.

God gives us love. Something to love

    He lends us ; but, when love is grown  
To ripeness, that on which it throve  
    Falls off, and love is left alone.

## v.

This is the curse of time. Alas !

    In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;  
Once thro' mine own doors Death did pass :  
    One went, who never hath return'd.

## vi.

He will not smile—not speak to me

    Once more. Two years his chair is seen  
Empty before us. That was he  
    Without whose life I had not been.

## vii.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star

    Rose with you thro' a little arc  
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
    Shot on the sudden into dark.

## VIII.

I knew your brother : his mute dust  
 I honour and his living worth :  
 A man more pure and bold and just  
 Was never born into the earth.

## IX.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
 Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.  
 Great Nature is more wise than I :  
 I will not tell you not to weep.

## X.

And though mine own eyes fill with dew,  
 Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,  
 I will not even preach to you,  
 " Weep, weeping dulls the inward pain."

## XI.

Let Grief be her own mistress still.  
 She loveth her own anguish deep  
 More than much pleasure. Let her will  
 Be done—to weep or not to weep.

## XII.

I will not say " God's ordinance  
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;"  
 For that is not a common chance  
 That takes away a noble mind.

## XIII.

His memory long will live alone  
 In all our hearts, as mournful light  
 That broods above the fallen sun,  
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

## XIV.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near  
 Cast down her eyes, and in her throat  
 Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear  
 Dropt on my tablets as I wrote.

## XV.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,  
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,  
 Who miss the brother of your youth ?  
 Yet something I did wish to say :

## XVI.

For he too was a friend to me :

Both are my friends, and my true breast  
Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be  
That only silence suiteth best.

## XVII.

Words weaker than your grief would make  
Grief more. 'Twere better I should cease ;  
Although myself could almost take  
The place of him that sleeps in peace.

## XVIII.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :  
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,  
While the stars burn, the moons increase,  
And the great ages onward roll.

## XIX.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.  
Nothing comes to thee new or strange.  
Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;  
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

You ask me, why, though ill at ease,  
    Within this region I subsist,  
    Whose spirits fail within the mist.  
And languish for the purple seas ?

It is the land that freemen till,  
    That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
    The land, where girt with friends or foes  
A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,  
    A land of just and old renown,  
    Where Freedom broadens slowly down  
From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
     But by degrees to fullness wrought,  
     The strength of some diffusive thought  
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
     Opinion, and induce a time  
     When single thought is civil crime,  
 And individual freedom mute ;

Though Power should make from land to land  
     The name of Britain trebly great—  
     Though every channel of the State  
 Should almost choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,  
     Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,  
     And I will see before I die  
 The palms and temples of the South.

---

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,  
    The thunders breaking at her feet :  
Above her shook the starry lights :  
    She heard the torrents meet.

Within her place she did rejoice,  
    Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind.  
But fragments of her mighty voice  
    Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field  
    To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
    The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works.

From her isle-altar gazing down.

Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,

And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.

The wisdom of a thousand years

Is in them. May perpetual youth

Keep dry their light from tears :

That her fair form may stand and shine,

Make bright our days and light our dreams.

Turning to scorn with lips divine

The falsehood of extremes !



---

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-brought  
From out the storied Past, and used  
Within the Present, but transfused  
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends.  
For English natures, freemen, friends,  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings,  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
 To weakness, neither hide the ray  
 From those, not blind, who wait for day,  
 Though sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds :  
 But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
 Before her to whatever sky  
 Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :  
 Cut Prejudice against the grain :  
 But gentle words are always gain :  
 Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
 Of pension, neither count on praise :  
 It grows to guerdon after-days :  
 Nor deal in watchwords overmuch ;

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
 Not master'd by some modern term ;  
 Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :  
 And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
 With Life, that, working strongly, binds—  
 Set in all lights by many minds.  
 To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
 And moist and dry, devising long,  
 Thro' many agents making strong,  
 Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
 We all are changed by still degrees.  
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
 To ingroove itself with that, which flies,  
 And work, a joint of state, that plies  
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
 For all the past of Time reveals  
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
 Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
 A motion toiling in the gloom—  
 The Spirit of the years to come  
 Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
 Completion in a painful school ;  
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
 New Majesties of mighty States--

The warders of the growing hour,  
 But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;  
 And round them sea and air are dark  
 With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
 Is bodied forth the second whole.  
 Regard gradation, lest the soul  
 Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
 And heap their ashes on the head ;  
 To shame the boast so often made,  
 That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
 Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
 To follow flying steps of Truth  
 Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
 Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
 And this be true, till Time shall close,  
 That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
 To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
 But with his hand against the hilt,  
 Would pace the troubled land, like Peace :

Not less, though dogs of Faction bay,  
 Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
 Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
 That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke  
 From either side, nor veil his eyes :  
 And if some dreadful need should rise  
 Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead :  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

## THE GOOSE.

- \* -

I.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,  
Her rags scarce held together ;  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather.

II.

He held a goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd rhyme and reason,  
“ Here, take the goose, and keep you warm,  
It is a stormy season.”

III.

She caught the white goose by the leg,  
A goose—’twas no great matter.  
The goose let fall a golden egg  
With cackle and with clatter.



## IV.

She dropt the goose, and caught the pelf,  
And ran to tell her neighbours ;  
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,  
And rested from her labours.

## V.

And feeding high, and living soft.  
Grew plump and able-bodied ;  
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd.  
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

## VI.

So sitting, served by man and maid.  
She felt her heart grow prouder :  
But ah ! the more the white goose laid  
It clack'd and cackled louder.

## VII.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;  
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :  
She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

## VIII.

“ A quinsy choke thy cursed note ! ”  
 Then wax'd her anger stronger.  
 “ Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,  
 I will not bear it longer.”

## IX.

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat ;  
 Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.  
 The goose flew this way and flew that.  
 And fill'd the house with clamour.

## X.

As head and heels upon the floor  
 They flounder'd all together,  
 There strode a stranger to the door,  
 And it was windy weather :

## XI.

He took the goose upon his arm.  
 He utter'd words of scorning :  
 “ So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
 It is a stormy morning.”

## XII.

The wild wind rang from park and plain,  
And round the attics rumbled,  
Till all the tables danced again,  
And half the chimneys tumbled.

## XIII.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,  
The blast was hard and harder,  
Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,  
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder ;

## XIV.

And while on all sides breaking loose  
Her household fled the danger,  
Quoth she. "The Devil take the goose,  
And God forget the stranger !"

END OF VOL. I.

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The second division of this volume was published in the winter of 1832. Some of the poems have been considerably altered. Others have been added, which, with one exception, were written in 1833.

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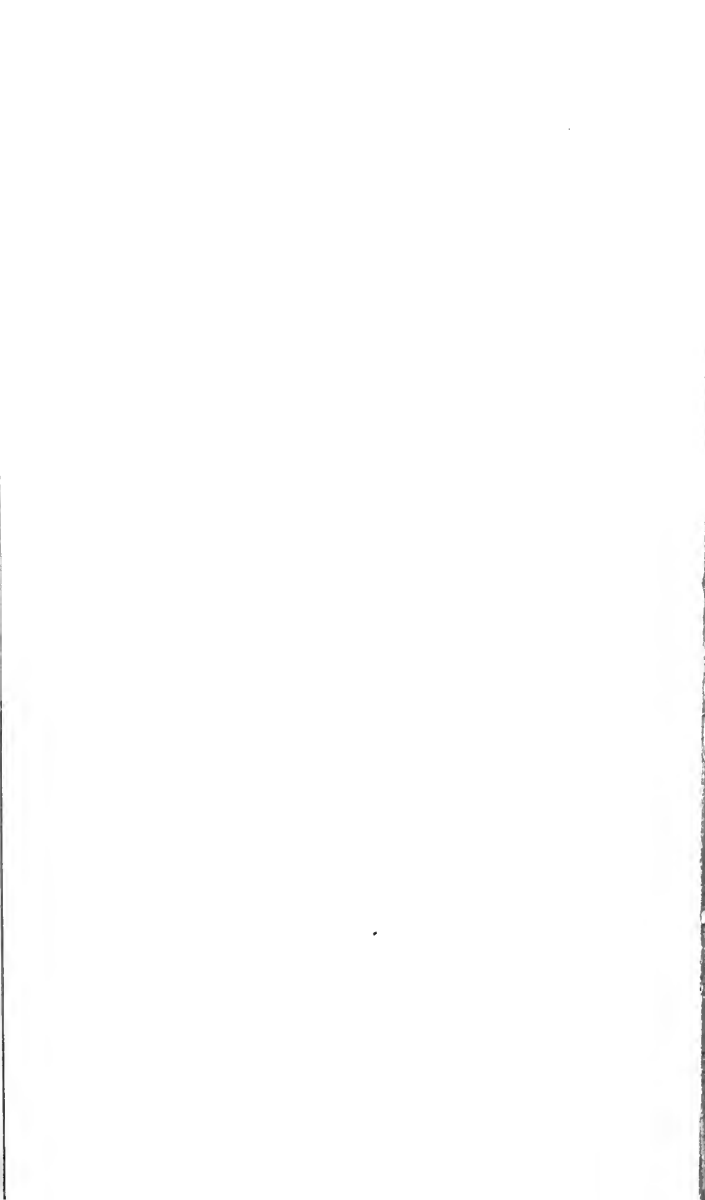
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